

## A Moment To Late

by Wishful Thinker

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Summary: Shmi is dieing...

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Shmi Skywalker coughed violently as she continued to clean the engine parts. Her hands were old and sore, and her back ached from the way she was hunched over her work. Watto had worked her less and less these last few days, but it hadn't helped. Even he had figured it out. This wasn't just another small cold, it wouldn't go away in a few days. It was much worse.

Only forty-one years old, Shmi was dieing. Ever since she had become a slave she had worked hard. But she had somehow managed. The times she was about to give up, she only had to think of her son and she would be able to regain her health. But she didn't even have that anymore.

The last time she had seen her son was more than ten years ago, and as much as she hated herself for it, her memory of him was fading. She was surprised she had lasted this long. But whenever she caught herself wishing Anakin had stayed, she would immediatly feel guilty. After all, she at least knew that he was becoming a Jedi, like he had always wanted too. If she had to live the rest of her days alone just so he could have a better life, than so be it.

Still, and she knew it was selfish, she wished she could see him just once more. Before she went she only wanted a glimpse, or maybe just a word or two on how he was doing. But she doubted she would get the chance.

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Anakin Skywalker walked the familar streets towards his house. His

master, Obi-Wan Kenobi, had agreed that he could visit his mother while they were there on business. They only had time for a short visit, but he still couldn't hardly wait.

Quickening his step, the padawen was almost running towards his old home.

When it came into view, his heart leap, even though it looked just like the other houses he had passed on the way. Knocking on the door, he waited impatiently for the door to open. He was about to knock twice when the door opened to reveal a withered blue form floating in the air.

"Watto?" He asked the form of his old owner.

The shape nodded sadly. He moved aside to let Anakin in, and when he did Anakin got a look inside.

Two med droids where slowly moving the body of his mother onto a carrier. The dead body of his mother.

For a second he stood still, then the anger hit.

The only living person around him at the time was Watto, so he got the bulk of the anger. It seemed so easy to blame him. He must have worked her to hard.

But inside Anakin was falling apart. If only he had walked faster, had come here when they first arrived. 'What ifs' ran through his mind so fast that he was relieved to be able to take the anger out on someone else.

Watto never saw it coming. One minute he was grieving, the next a searing pain errupted in his mid-section. Then darkness.

The med droids were next. Anakin was blinded by his own grief, he never realized what he was doing.

When his mind finally cleared, he saw his bloodsoaked clothes, and could hear the echo of screams in his ears. Around him the street was full of bodies. What had he done? He could already see the disappointment in Obi-Wans eyes. He didn't think he could stand anymore. His head felt like it might explode. Then he did the only thing he could think of. He ran. And vowed never to return.

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